



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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EARLY PREVENTION IS KEY TO CURBING WEST NILE VIRUS

Residents Urged to Eliminate Mosquito Breeding Sources Now

San Diego County residents are encouraged to help with West Nile virus abatement efforts now to prevent West Nile virus cases later this year. The ongoing rain, followed by intermittent warm weather, has created perfect mosquito-breeding conditions and may result in large numbers of mosquitoes.

"Preventing mosquitoes is the key to preventing West Nile virus," said Gary Erbeck, director, Department of Environmental Health. "By controlling them now, we can reduce mosquito populations in the spring and summer. There is no cure for West Nile virus, so the public needs to stay vigilant and stop mosquitoes from breeding on and around their property."

Residents should eliminate all standing water sources in places such as plant saucers, old tires, and children's toys. Poorly maintained green swimming pools can also breed huge numbers of mosquitoes. Anything that can hold water can breed hundreds of mosquitoes per week.

Erbeck urged the public to inform the Vector Control Program about mosquito-breeding sites including ponds, creeks or other green pools of standing water.

Most people infected with West Nile virus have no symptoms although a few will develop fever, skin rashes, headaches and body aches. Some may develop long-term neurological problems affecting speech, swallowing, memory, and balance. Severe cases may develop meningitis or encephalitis. People over age 50 and individuals with compromised immune systems are at the highest risk of developing more serious illnesses.

For more information, call the County's West Nile virus information line at 1-888-551-INFO (4636) or visit the official County West Nile virus Web site at www.SDFighttheBite.com.

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